

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A content managing system having a content managing portion comprising:  
a content library for storing a plurality of content files;  
5 library managing means for managing said content library;  
customer file storing means, having areas assigned to individual users, for  
storing content files for the individual users;  
customer file managing means for managing said customer file storing means;  
delivery managing means for managing the delivery of a content file to a user  
10 terminal unit, wherein the content managing portion and the user terminal unit are  
connected through a network; and  
wherein the content managing portion is operated from the user terminal unit  
through the network so as to manage a content file of each user.
- 15 2. The content managing system as set forth in claim 1, wherein said customer  
file managing means manages the areas assigned to individual users such that a user  
area assigned to an individual user can be accessed from only the user terminal unit of  
the user to whom the user area has been assigned; and  
wherein said customer file managing means processes a content file stored in  
20 the user area corresponding to a command received from the user terminal unit of the  
user to whom the user area has been assigned.

3. The content managing system as set forth in claim 1, wherein said customer file managing means manages the used state of the user area with a database.

5 4. The content managing system as set forth in claim 1, wherein said customer file managing means allows the used state of the user area to be displayed by the user terminal unit of the user to whom the user area has been assigned.

10 5. The content managing system as set forth in claim 1, wherein said library managing means manages content files stored in said library with a database.

6. The content managing system as set forth in claim 1, wherein said library managing means manages content files that are scheduled to be registered later to said library as well as content files currently stored in said library.

15 7. The content managing system as set forth in claim 1, wherein said delivery managing means manages a user's delivery request with a database.

8. The content managing system as set forth in claim 1, wherein said delivery  
20 managing means performs a process for purchasing a content file corresponding to a user's delivery request when the content file has been registered to said library, and wherein said delivery managing means performs a process for purchasing a content file on a scheduled registration date when the content file is scheduled to be registered later.

9. The content managing system as set forth in claim 8, wherein the content file purchasing process is performed by copying the content file that the user wants to purchase from said library to the user area for the user.

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10. The content managing system as set forth in claim 1, wherein an automatic delete on / off option can be designated to a content file stored in each user area, and wherein when a new content file is stored to the user area, if the storage capacity of the user area becomes insufficient, said customer file managing means deletes a content  
10 file designated with the automatic delete on option from the user area.

11. A content managing apparatus, comprising:  
a content library for storing a plurality of content files;  
library managing means for managing said content library;  
15 customer file storing means, having areas assigned to individual users, for storing content files for the individual users;  
customer file managing means for managing said customer file storing means;  
and  
delivery managing means for managing the delivery of a content file to a user  
20 terminal unit; and  
communicating means for connecting the content managing apparatus to a network, wherein the content managing apparatus can be connected to the user terminal through the network.

12. The content managing apparatus as set forth in claim 11, wherein said customer  
file managing means manages the user area for each user so that the user area can be  
accessed from only the user terminal unit of the user who has been assigned to the user  
5 area, and wherein said customer file managing means processes a content file stored in  
the user area corresponding to a command received from the user terminal unit of the  
user who has been assigned to the user area.

13. The content managing apparatus as set forth in claim 11, wherein said customer  
10 file managing means manages the used state of the user area with a database.

14. The content managing apparatus as set forth in claim 11, wherein said customer  
file managing means allows the used state of the user area to be displayed by the user  
terminal unit of the user to whom the user area has been assigned.

15. The content managing apparatus as set forth in claim 11, wherein said library  
managing means manages content files stored in said library with a database.

16. The content managing apparatus as set forth in claim 11, wherein said library  
20 managing means manages content files that are scheduled to be registered later to said  
library as well as content files currently stored in said library.

17. The content managing apparatus as set forth in claim 11, wherein said delivery  
managing means manages a user's delivery request with a database.

18. The content managing apparatus as set forth in claim 11, wherein said delivery managing means performs a process for purchasing a content file corresponding to a user's delivery request when the content file has been registered to said library; and

5 wherein said delivery managing means performs a process for purchasing a content file on a scheduled registration date when the content file is scheduled to be registered later.

19. The content managing apparatus as set forth in claim 18, wherein the content  
10 file purchasing process is performed by copying the content file that the user wants to purchase from said library to the user area for the user.

20. The content managing apparatus as set forth in claim 11, wherein an automatic delete on / off option can be designated for a content file stored in each user area; and  
15 wherein when a new content file is stored to the user area, if the storage capacity of the user area becomes insufficient, said customer file managing means deletes a content file designated with the automatic delete on option from the user area.

21. A content managing method using a content managing portion having a content  
20 library for storing a plurality of content files and a content managing portion for assigning user areas to a customer file storage, the user areas storing content files for individual users, comprising the steps of:

connecting the content managing portion and a user terminal unit through a network; and

causing the user terminal unit to operate the content managing portion through the network so as to manage a content file of each user.

22. The content managing method as set forth in claim 21,

5 wherein the user area for each user is managed so that the user area can be accessed from only the user terminal unit of the user to whom the user area has been assigned, and

wherein a content file stored in the user area is processed corresponding to a command received from the user terminal unit of the user to whom the user area has  
10 been assigned.

23. The content managing method as set forth in claim 21, wherein the used state of the user area is managed with a database.

5 24. The content managing method as set forth in claim 21, wherein the used state of the user area can be displayed by the user terminal unit of the user to whom the user area has been assigned.

25. The content managing method as set forth in claim 21, wherein content files  
10 stored in the library are managed with a database.

26. The content managing method as set forth in claim 21, wherein content files that are scheduled to be registered later to the library are managed as well as content files currently stored in the library.

15 27. The content managing method as set forth in claim 21, wherein a user's delivery request is managed with a database.

28. The content managing method as set forth in claim 21, wherein a process for  
20 purchasing a content file is performed corresponding to a user's delivery request when the content file has been registered to the library; and

wherein a process for purchasing a content file is performed on a scheduled registration date when the content file is scheduled to be registered later.

29. The content managing method as set forth in claim 28, wherein the content file purchasing process is performed by copying the content file that the user wants to purchase from the library to the user area for the user.

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30. The content managing method as set forth in claim 21, wherein an automatic delete on / off option can be designated to a content file stored in each user area; and

wherein when a new content file is stored to the user area, if the storage capacity of the user area becomes insufficient, a content file designated with the

10 automatic delete on option is deleted from the user area.

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